



**MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC FORUM
HELD ON 28 AUGUST 2019**

1. Opening

The Public Forum commenced at 5.32pm.

2. Presentations relating to listed Items on the Council Agenda

The following presenters were heard:

Name	Item no	Item description	For/Against/Neutral
Mr Peter Evans	9.6	Bungendore Roundabout - Designs and Consultation	Against
Mr Andrew Riley	9.6	Bungendore Roundabout - Designs and Consultation	Against
Mr David MacLaren	9.6	Bungendore Roundabout - Designs and Consultation	Against
Mr John Putt	9.6	Bungendore Roundabout - Designs and Consultation	Against
Mrs Deborah Putt	9.6	Bungendore Roundabout - Designs and Consultation	Against

3. Petitions

The following petitions were tabled:

Received from	Petition title	Number of signatures	Action
Tammie Spackman On behalf of CaNTER Collective	Molonglo Rail Trail	302 accepted	The petition has been made available to Councillors and will be forwarded to responsible staff for action.

4. 'Questions on Notice' from the Public

Responses to the following 'Questions on Notice' received up to 21 August 2019 were provided and tabled at the meeting (see attached for responses):

Received from	In relation to
Ms Sandra Young	15 questions in relation to the Sydney Office proposal.
Ms Katrina Willis	Water pollution in Queanbeyan River from Googong township in December 2018.
Ms Katrina Willis	Three questions regarding the Ellerton Drive Extension.
Ms Katrina Willis	Valuation of properties along Crawford and Collett Streets.
Ms Katrina Willis	Multi-storey car park on Morisset Street.

5. Presentations by Invitation from the CEO/General Manager

There were no presentations.

6. Closure

As there were no further matters, the Public Forum closed at 5.47pm.



ATTACHMENT TO MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC FORUM HELD ON 28 August 2019

4 'Questions on Notice' from the Public

Responses to the following 'Questions on Notice' received up to *Wednesday 21 August 2019* were provided and tabled at the meeting

Questions submitted by: Sandra Young

1. Who identified the Sydney office proposal

Response – CEO

The proposal has been discussed with the CRJO and presented to QPRC and other NSW regional cities by Wagga Wagga City Council (WWCC).

2. When was the contract for the rental of the QPRC Sydney office at the Rocks signed?

Response - CEO

WWCC is the tenant.

3. Was a report prepared with a business case for the proposal?

Response - CEO

The benefits of the lease agreement were outlined in the Council report on 24 July. The impetus for a regional project management officer is to coordinate delivery of large-scale projects in the region with benefits to include:

- focused effort on projects based on strategic drivers
- focused effort on delivery in electoral cycles, and the terms of grant/funding
- minimise exposure to cost escalation
- potential for specialisation, scale, sequencing, and synergies
- potential to smooth out capex
- potential to capitalise on, and minimise outsource to, consultants

Many regional councils struggle to attract specialist and other professional staff to undertake relevant study, strategy and infrastructure project work, relying on market premiums to salaries as a minimum. Engaging consultants is usually at a higher margin. Delays in delivery of significant projects add the risk of cost escalation and erode the value of grants. A number of recruitment processes for specialist staff have been unsuccessful, however providing a Sydney-based option will increase our chances of securing the right person for the job, reducing the ongoing recruitment costs

The WWCC proposal is an innovative approach – if councils 'can't bring staff to the work, then take the work to the staff' – in this case, Sydney.

This approach may save some of those costs and travel by consultants and associated share of office accommodation costs, as well as the time and costs of multiple recruitment processes. Work space for staff when visiting Sydney for other purposes improves productive work time.

4. How long was the proposal before councillors before a decision was made?

Response - CEO

Councillors were briefed and provided with the report prior to the meeting on 24 July.

5. How many QPRC staff will be working at this Sydney office, and what will be the cost of their council staff wages for this Sydney office for the year of their contract?

Response - CEO

This is dependent on vacancies and the outcome of recruitment processes. The office will not necessarily be used for existing QPRC employees, however will be made available for staff that are recruited via the merit-based assessment that are unable to commit to a full time move to the Queanbeyan area and would be better suited to working from Sydney.

6. What will be the estimated cost of fitting out this Sydney QPRC with furniture, phones computers etc?

Response - CEO

WWCC is head tenant. The office retains fitout from the government agency vacating the site.

7. Will travel costs from Queanbeyan to Sydney be factored into the QPRC Sydney office costs, and if so, what will be their estimated costs in the year of operation of this Sydney QPRC office?

Response - CEO

The office will be used for staff who are not regularly based in Queanbeyan. Queanbeyan, Braidwood or Bungendore-based staff who are required to travel to Sydney for operational reasons will be able to use the office for work, or meetings, if required.

8. What mode of transport will be used-car/train/plane, for council staff to visit this office?

Response - CEO

Currently, staff attend Sydney for a variety of meetings. The most appropriate form of travel is selected.

9. Will QPRC have access to parking in this rental building, or will additional parking charges apply to QPRC vehicles?

Response - CEO

Information is not known at this stage.

10. How many vehicles will the Sydney office have access to, and what will be their estimated yearly costs?

Response - CEO

Information is not known at this stage.

11. The rental of office spaces from the main lessee, Wagga council, was estimated at around \$20,000 per year. If Wagga council closes this office, would QPRC still be indebted for their part of the yearly rental, or perhaps more?

Response - CEO

Each of the regional councils have been offered an opportunity to use part of the office, workstations and associated facilities leased by WWCC, at a price of \$20,000 each. The cost of the lease to WWCC is greater.

12. What will be the estimated total costs of the QPRC conducting business from this Sydney office that have not yet been identified in Questions 5 to 13 above, such as insurance/advertising and utility costings?

Response - CEO

No other costs have been identified. WWCC is head tenant and responsible for outgoings.

13. Would any currently employed QPRC staff be eligible to work in this Sydney office, or would other new staff be recruited for this Sydney office?**Response - CEO**

See response to question 5.

14. Would QPRC ratepayers receive regular feedback about this QPRC Sydney office, and in what form, or forms?**Response - CEO**

The relative cost and benefits of continuing to use the office will be reported after 12 months.

15. How will the success, or otherwise, of this venture be quantified?**Response - CEO**

While those measures are yet to be worked through with WWCC, they would include:

- Success in attracting relevant specialist/professional staff to Sydney office. For example, WWCC recently had dozens of candidates apply for roles based on Sydney, compared to a handful for similar positions based in Wagga.
- Setting up regional project office (subject to separate funding) with Canberra Region Joint Organisation
- Comparative use and cost of staff v consultants for same type of work

Questions submitted by Katrina Willis**16. Can the council provide an update on its investigations to ascertain the source of water pollution that emanated from Googong township in December 2018, affecting Queanbeyan River, and any compliance actions it has taken in response to the investigation?****Response – Natural and Built Character**

A penalty notice of \$8,000 was issued to both the contractor and site superintendent on 24 April 2019 under the contract for the subdivision works for the pollution offence alleged to have taken place on 7 November 2018.

17. According to the Council's most recent newsletter circulated to residents, the anticipated opening date of the Ellerton Drive Extension has been moved back from mid-2020 to late 2020.**Response – Community Connections**

The Ellerton Drive Extension project is still on track for completion in mid-2020. The late 2020 date referenced in the 2019-20 QPRC Operational Plan overview brochure was published in error.

18. Is this delay related to recent problems with contractors working on the road?**Response – Community Connections**

See question 17.

19. Can the council advise whether there are any financial implications for QPRC arising from the contracting problems?**Response – Community Connections**

There are no financial implications for Council as the project is still on track for a mid-2020 completion.

- 20. Has the council received a valuation for the properties along Crawford and Collett streets proposed to be exchanged for unspecified public works, and if so, is the valuation based on current land use or on potential land use (i.e. multi-storey housing, hotel and commercial development)?**

Response – Organisational Capability

No valuations have been provided at this stage for properties along Crawford and Collett Sts suggested in the question.

- 21. With respect to the Council resolution to build a multi-storey car park on the Morisset St site previously earmarked for other potential development uses:**
- a. Why did the council decide to build a multi-storey carpark without first developing a business case?**
 - b. In the absence of a business case, what is the justification for spending \$10 million on a multi-level car park on the site?**
 - c. Did the council request funds from the NSW Government towards the cost of building the car park?**

Response – Community Connections

Council prepared and lodged a business case for the CBD Transformation in 2018, as reported to Council and published on the website. An application for grant funding of \$27.5m was lodged with the NSW Government. That business case included the multilevel carpark, as proposed in the Car Parking Strategy. The business case included estimates and financing for the carpark, which did not specify a grant. The opportunity to receive funding of \$10m towards a carpark proposed to be fully funded by Council in the business case, was considered reasonable to bring forward that Stage 3 project.

A report has been prepared for the 28 August Council meeting regarding an alternate use for these funds following a request from NSW Police to defer the construction of the car park until the new Queanbeyan Police Station is complete.